

Information matters: delivery plan for 2009–2010

Building government's capability in managing
knowledge and information



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Introduction

In November 2008, the government published its strategy ***Information Matters – Building Government’s Capability in Managing Knowledge and Information***. The Knowledge Council is the cross-government body responsible for Knowledge and Information Management (KIM). Its role is to lead government in the better use and management of its knowledge and information, and to support government in ensuring that it has the capability to do so effectively. The Knowledge Council is responsible for delivering recommendations made in ***Information Matters***.

This document is an action plan for the strategy that outlines what needs to be done (much of which is already underway). It aims to build on the progress made in recent years to consolidate effective knowledge and information management in government. We have already delivered against a number of the targets, for example the Civil Pages project, as part of the ‘finding someone who knows’ work strand, is now operational; and we have published a comprehensive skills and competency framework for KIM professionals in government.

Wherever possible, we are delivering ***Information Matters*** by asking departments which are already doing relevant work in their departments to lead on those activities on behalf of government and to share their findings. Their experience, the lessons they learn and examples of good practice can then be shared with the Knowledge Council and potentially endorsed and promoted as exemplars for the rest of government. We believe this is the most effective way of deploying the expertise and knowledge that exists across government, and this philosophy of being stronger together rather than separately underpins our drive to build a cohesive profession in government.

Effective KIM will help to deliver more efficient government. We are, for example, seeking to develop common solutions to universal technical problems, to engage with suppliers of software more effectively, and we are addressing the need to measure and demonstrate our value to the departments we serve. We are working closely with the other professions in government to ensure that we are benchmarking and challenging our performance.

We are also conscious of the need to ensure that we sustain our ability to change and improve to meet tomorrow’s knowledge and information management challenges. To this end, we will undertake horizon scanning to provide an evidence base for our future activities, and we are committed to developing people across government to build our capability as a Function in the longer term.

We welcome the involvement of all KIM professionals. If you have any comments or would like to be involved with our work programme, please contact the Government Knowledge and Information Management Network team at gkimnetwork@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.



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1. Knowing what information we have

Lead: The National Archives

Desired outcome

Departments are able to identify their information assets and describe them in a way that is easily understood and meaningful to other departments, enabling them to mitigate information risks, re-use information, and understand what each other's information portfolio contains.

Background

Understanding what information we hold, its technical characteristics and where we store it underpins effective information management – whether that is information assurance, avoiding digital obsolescence, sharing information or re-using it. Several different organisations such as The National Archives and Information Security Assurance already work directly with departments to support them in understanding what information they have and how to deal with it. However, departments have told us that they would welcome a more joined-up approach (eg definitions, self-help tools and practical support). Knowing what information we have, will ensure that guidance and support in the areas of Information Assurance and KIM are aligned, and where possible integrated to ensure support for departments is practical and straightforward.

Workplan

Deliverable/activity	Date
1. Develop common definition of Information Assets endorsed by Information Security Assurance, CESG, The National Archives and the Information Domain. Communicate this common definition to departments with context and an explanation of what it means for them.	December 2009
2. Produce guidance for departments on how to identify and characterise their information assets. This guidance will also identify the potential for re-use of their information assets.	December 2009 – principles July 2010 – detailed guidance
3. Develop and maintain a working relationship between ISA and The National Archives to ensure consistent best practise guidance on KIM.	Ongoing

What will the outputs look like?

- Guidance
- Documentation
- Consultancy services
- Workshops

2. Deciding what to keep

Lead: The National Archives

Desired outcome

Departments will be able to identify what information they should keep (in any format) in order to meet operational, accountability and historical needs.

Background

Government departments need to keep the right information to manage their business, maintain accountability, support evidence-based policy making and to comply with access legislation. It is important that they identify at the point of creation which information they need to keep, and which is of short-term value only. This will allow valuable information to be used more efficiently and will help prevent departments from being overwhelmed by ephemera. More importantly it will help departments manage the risks of not being able to provide the evidence and audit trails for key decisions and actions.

Workplan

Deliverable/activity	Date
1. Define the project scope and deliverables.	Completed
2. Initiation of the pilots. Supporting the pilot departments, summarising techniques and ideas into guidance and tools.	June 2009 – March 2010
3. Five departments to have statements and schedules for key business units about what information they need to keep and to have processes in place to ensure that this happens.	March 2010
4. All major government departments to have statements and schedules, for major business units, about what information they need to keep and to have processes in place to ensure that this happens.	March 2011

What will the outputs look like?

- Guidance and exemplars
- Facilitated knowledge sharing on best practice

3. Finding someone who knows

Lead: Head of the KIM Profession

Desired outcome

Civil servants can find and work with people with relevant experience or skills. Teams can collaborate and communicate in a secure government environment.

Background

We increasingly need to work across departmental boundaries more than ever before. Finding and collaborating with others across the civil service can be challenging because of fast turnover and departmental boundaries. Civil Pages is a secure web tool which enables civil servants to locate people with the right skills and knowledge, and to work in online communities to discuss and develop topics in a protected environment.

Workplan

Deliverable/activity	Date
1. Develop Civil Pages system robustness and enhance system security.	December 2009
2. Integrate service with wider 'connecting people' portfolio to make it easy for civil servants to use.	December 2009
3. Review value of service to constantly improve its functionality.	Continuous
4. Secure long-term funding.	December 2009
5. Ensure that all senior civil servants have their details populated.	March 2010
6. Customer Engagement and Marketing strategy to secure user input and market to new customers.	Strategy completed Implementation ongoing

What will the outputs look like?

- Civil pages network available across central government

4. Developing a collaborative culture

Lead: Department for International Development (DFID)

Desired outcome

Individuals and teams collaborate more effectively within departments, across government and with external partners to deliver more efficient and successful policy and operational outcomes. Collaborative and knowledge-sharing behaviours are embedded in business practice, valued at all levels within the organisation, and there is a high level of competence in using appropriate tools and techniques for collaboration and knowledge sharing.

Background

The cross-cutting nature of government business and Public Service Agreements demands better collaboration across departmental boundaries to develop and co-ordinate policy more effectively, and to deliver public services. Government also needs to collaborate with delivery partners outside government including NGOs, educational and research bodies and the private sector, without compromising public information and knowledge assets. Many civil servants have already embraced collaboration technologies outside the workplace using rapidly evolving web-based tools. Government now needs to exploit these new practices to work smarter and deliver efficiency savings.

Workplan

Deliverable/activity	Date
1. Develop elements of DFID KIM Strategy relating to collaborative culture and an action plan for delivering these. Discuss emerging requirements with Knowledge Council colleagues in Technology community group.	Completed
2. Identify products, tools and techniques from Knowledge Council colleagues including GCHQ and Department for Health that can be re-used or adapted in delivering DFID's strategy.	Completed
3. Identify elements that can usefully be shared with the Knowledge Council community, and determine the format in which they can be delivered without excessive work or re-packaging.	Completed
4. Phased delivery of re-usable tools, techniques and approaches to developing a collaborative culture and case studies presenting their application in DFID.	March 2010
5. Host masterclasses to present and discuss experience (successes and failures) to KIM practitioners within the KC community.	March 2010

What will the outputs look like?

- Generic tools
- Techniques and approaches to developing a collaborative culture
- Case studies and masterclasses

5. Government KIM professionalism programme

Lead: Ministry of Defence

Desired outcome

KIM practitioners recognise themselves as part of a professional community. They are multi-skilled, able to apply their professional expertise in a variety of roles. They know what skills they need to develop and what development opportunities exist. Departments have the tools they need to develop KIM capability, and are planning to ensure continuity of skills for the future. Government has an effective KIM Function which enables better delivery of Government's objectives. Other allied professions can adopt KIM skills that are relevant to their work.

Background

A number of initiatives are being taken forward across government to develop core and functional expertise. The most notable current programme is the Government Skills Strategy, which sets out a bigger role for all Heads of Profession.

Now a recognised corporate function, the Government KIM Function aims to bring together knowledge and information disciplines and develop a collective identity for the KIM Function as a single, multi-skilled body of professionals. The function will build our reputational standing to establish us on a par with others, such as HR, Communications and Finance, and allow us to influence more effectively as experts who are integral to a department's business. The Professionalism Programme supports this by working to develop the capability of the collective body of government knowledge and information practitioners.

Workplan

Deliverable/activity	Date
1. Develop a more comprehensive skills and competency framework and supporting documentation to articulate and define government KIM professional skills, and to support the career development of KIM practitioners across government.	Completed
2. Develop a toolkit for Heads of KIM and those responsible for professional development of the Government KIM community and FAQs to support the Government KIM Function.	Completed
2. Build an active government Knowledge and Information Management practitioner community, enabling networking and the sharing of good practice.	Completed
4. Work with Heads of KIM to develop proposals for talent management and succession planning.	March 2010
5. Map roles, qualifications and training courses onto the skills and competency framework.	March 2010

Deliverable/activity	Date
6. Work in partnership with other corporate functions at the centre, and with Government Skills where appropriate, to continue to raise the profile of KIM and make sure we're aligned with other professions where there are shared agendas.	Ongoing

What will the outputs look like?

- Skills framework
- Documentation including guidance
- GKIMN wiki content
- Networking events/opportunities for sharing and exchange of good practice

6. Maintaining a strong KIM audit and improvement mechanism

Lead: The National Archives

Desired outcome

Deliver measurable improvements across government by providing robust, independent validation of the standards and integrity of information management processes and capability within departments.

Background

The Information Management Assessment (IMA) Programme helps government departments to adopt best practice in KIM by assessing them against the requirements of the Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on Records Management under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The assessments address the collection, storage, access, use and disposal of information as well as departmental culture and governance and leadership. Expert advice is then provided by The National Archives to help departments address any areas of concern raised during the assessment process.

Workplan

Deliverable/activity	Date
Information Management Assessments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environment Agency Department for Transport Department for Children, Families and Schools Foreign and Commonwealth Office Ministry of Justice HM Revenue and Customs 	Completed Completed Completed Completed February 2010 March 2010
Post-assessment reviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Defence (MOD) spot check Department of Health (on behalf of the Information Commissioner) Department for International Development 	January 2010 March 2010 March 2010
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with CESG to develop a more integrated approach to IMAs and the Information Assurance assessment programme. 	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a self-assessment approach to allow departments to assess between main reviews. 	March 2010

What will the outputs look like?

- Reports and recommendations linked to the individual needs of departments
- Targeted support from The National Archives

7. Aligning the KIM and Information Assurance maturity models

Lead: The National Archives and Information Security and Assurance

Desired outcome

The Information Assurance and KIM maturity models are closely aligned, allowing departments to assess maturity levels for key knowledge and information management activities, including information assurance, in one single exercise. This should reduce workload, but more importantly, improve the management of overall information risk.

Background

CESG have produced an Information Assurance Maturity Model and Framework to help departments assess their levels of Information Assurance maturity. The Knowledge Council has produced a separate maturity model for Knowledge and Information Management which encompasses some elements of Information Assurance. These two areas are interconnected and it is essential that they complement each other if we are to get the best out of both.

Workplan

The National Archives will work with CESG and Information Security and Assurance (ISA) to ensure that the two maturity models are fully aligned. It will also work with the Ministry of Justice to explore the practicalities of merging the two together to produce a combined model.

Deliverable/activity	Date
1. GKIMN and ISA to agree key Information Management elements to be included in the Information Assurance Maturity Model and framework for 2010/2011.	December 2009
2. MoJ to explore feasibility of informally merging the Information Assurance and Knowledge and Information Management Maturity models and report back to Knowledge Council.	March 2010

What will the outputs look like?

- Information Assurance Maturity Model which includes key information management activities. This should improve the management of overall information risk.

8. Commissioning, influencing and promoting effective guidance

Lead: Department for Business, Innovation and Skills

Desired outcome

KIM policies and processes are embedded across government, and knowledge and information assets are properly managed both now and in the future.

Background

Knowledge and information management in government is supported by standards and guidance produced across the public and private sectors. There is no central directory, and often standards which may impact on KIM have not been written with KIM in mind. There is no cross-government mechanism to identify gaps, or to prioritise and commission new material. In addition, there is little central co-ordination between those bodies which are producing new standards and guidance.

Workplan

Deliverable/activity	Date
1. Establish and embed a cross-government mechanism to proactively monitor proposals for new standards and guidance; to avoid duplication; to ensure appropriate expertise is made available to the commissioning body in order to deliver high quality standards and guidance which meet the needs of the government KIM profession.	Completed
2. Establish and embed cross-government processes for promoting new KIM standards and guidance.	Completed
3. Build a framework to provide access to published KIM standards and guidance, as part of The National Archives' new website.	December 2009
4. Establish and embed a cross-government mechanism to identify gaps, and prioritise and commission new standards and guidance.	December 2009

What will the outputs look like?

- Web-based framework indexing all published KIM standards
- Small cross-government group identifying and commissioning standards and guidance
- Small cross-government group monitoring and co-ordinating the production of new standards and guidance, and providing KIM expertise when necessary
- Mechanism for targeted promotion of new KIM guidance across government

9. Measuring and demonstrating the value of KIM

Lead: Government Knowledge and Information Management Network and Ministry of Justice

Desired outcome

KIM professionals can demonstrate the value for money that they bring to their organisations.

Background

Like any corporate function, knowledge and information management leaders need to be able to demonstrate the value that they bring to the wider business. We need to do this at a departmental level but also as a wider function in government. Clearly, achieving this is even more important than ever when resources are under significant pressure. But demonstrating the value of KIM is about more than just financial measures. Equally, it isn't sufficient to talk to senior decision-makers about the importance of KIM. We need to be able to show how our performance affects the department's/government's overall business outcomes, and monitor the risks of poor performance.

We also need to measure how a department's performance compares with others, in order to identify and learn from best practice and plan improvements where necessary.

Workplan

Deliverable/activity	Date
1. Interested departments to meet and bring examples of what they already measure, assess the feasibility of creating a core dataset, and begin to determine its contents.	Completed
2. Refine measures and processes of collection.	Completed
3. Knowledge Council agrees metrics and guidance. Head of Profession takes proposal to Corporate Functions Board.	Completed November 2009
4. Departments begin testing reporting process.	November 2009
5. Knowledge Council monitors results and helps resolve any difficulties departments are encountering.	Standing item at every Knowledge Council meeting

What will the outputs look like?

- KIM metrics
- Assessment process

10. Mitigating risks through Digital Continuity

Lead: The National Archives

Desired outcome

Government is able to use its digital information for as long as it is needed, to support accountability, efficiency and effectiveness.

Background

Digital continuity means making sure that digital information remains complete, available and usable for as long as it is needed for business purposes – over time, and through change. Digital continuity can only be assured when assets (information), environment (the technology that keeps information usable) and utility (what an organisation wants to do with the information you have) are all aligned. As technology and business requirements change, active intervention is required to keep digital information and its supporting technological environment aligned so that information assets can be used as needed.

Workplan

Overall project delivery milestones of:

- Digital Continuity Service structure of guidance and Framework established by June 2010
- Service at full operating capacity for government and embedded within TNA by March 2011

The Service will consist of the following components:

Deliverable/activity	Date
<p>Guidance and support on how to understand and address digital continuity risks, create an action plan and effectively mitigate identified risks using the right tools and services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk assessment pilot with DFID and Home Office. • Introductory guidance for mitigating continuity risks. • Full guidance for understanding continuity risks and risk assessments undertaken with First Wave departments. • Complete guidance for mitigating continuity risks and using the Framework of tools and services. • Advice and support for First Wave departments in identifying and mitigating continuity risks. 	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>March 2010</p> <p>June 2010</p> <p>July 2009 – June 2010</p>

<p>Commercial Framework Agreement: a selected range of commercially-provided tools and services from multiple providers, assured by TNA to address specific digital continuity technical and other risks. The Framework will be available for government and wider public sector to purchase continuity tools and services by June 2010.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage suppliers, analyse market, define requirements. • Commence procurement of Framework (with OGC Buying Solutions). • Complete procurement, establish Framework Agreement. 	<p>Completed Completed June 2010</p>
<p>Standards: standards and requirements for digital continuity tools and services to ensure that they are fit for purpose.</p>	<p>December 2010</p>

What will the outputs look like?

- Guidance and support
- Standards
- Commercial framework agreement

11. Engaging with suppliers – ensuring future systems are fit for purpose

Lead: Cabinet Office and Department for International Development

Desired outcome

- KIM leaders have good relationships with suppliers, understand the future direction of product and service development and are in a position to influence it.
- Future KIM systems are fit for purpose.
- Flexibility in service delivery is built into supplier procurement. Changes in requirements can be accommodated and shared across departments.
- Implementation and maintenance of systems is cost-effective.

Background

Informed by the work of colleagues involved in other Knowledge Council initiatives (notably What to Keep, Digital Continuity and Horizon Scanning) and by the need to create evidence-based strategies in their own departments, DFID and Cabinet Office will lead government's engagement with suppliers of KIM systems.

Workplan

Deliverable/activity	Date
1. Create a register of which department uses which systems, how they are supporting them and at which point in the future they will be looking to replace them.	March 2010
2. Work with CTO and CIO Council to establish mechanisms for communicating our needs to suppliers.	July – September 2010
3. Establish communities of practice for sharing solutions for KIM systems.	September – December 2010
4. Establish any common functional requirements across government and establish constraints (e.g. need for accreditation).	September 2010 – February 2011
5. Scope and produce recommendations on the possibilities of a shared KIM approach.	September 2010 – March 2011
6. Assess and report findings to the Knowledge Council on what is on the development horizon for the big players in the KIM space.	January – March 2011

What will the outputs look like?

- Report on likely software developments impacting on KIM, any common functional requirements across government and types of continued supplier engagement required
- Recommendations on the possibilities of a shared KIM approach

12. Horizon scanning

Lead: Department for International Development

Desired outcome

KIM leaders are aware of future developments likely to influence the Function and are able to develop KIM strategies for the future based on this intelligence.

Background

A large proportion of this delivery plan is focused on improving our day-to-day effectiveness and addressing today's challenges. However, if we are to build our capability and develop our Function for the future, we need to be aware of the likely trends that will impact on our work. This cannot be confined to technology. We are also interested in cultural shifts and other relevant developments. The Knowledge Council will identify, assess and where appropriate commission horizon scanning for areas which will impact significantly on the government KIM Function.

Workplan

Deliverable/activity	Date
1. Present findings to Knowledge Council and introduce debate and discussion across the Function. This will focus particularly on what the findings might mean for departmental KIM strategies.	August 2010

What will the outputs look like?

- Report
- Presentations
- Workshop for the Knowledge Council and the KIM network across government.

The Knowledge Council consists of senior leaders in knowledge and information management from across government. It acts as the professional lead for knowledge and information management on behalf of the civil service.

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